



APPA Speech Competition Preparation Guide

Speeches should INFORM and ENTERTAIN

TOPIC SELECTION

Care should be taken in selection of the topics. The topic should be relevant to the age of the presenter and the experiences they have had.

Topics should not lead to the denigration and put downs of people. This often arises when contestants choose to speak about family members. Language should be appropriate and the use of slang and colloquialisms avoided.

TIME

Speeches presented by contestants should be limited to three minutes duration.

SPEECH CONSTRUCTION

There are three parts to a speech:

- introduction,
- body [eg develop 3 main points]
- conclusion

In order to gain the audience's attention there needs to be a strong introduction: e.g. "Water rushed down the stairs towards us, what was I to do?" Avoid having speech starters like: "Today I am going to talk about..."

It is important to involve the audience, keep the audience interested and keen to hear what is the message of the speech.

Once their attention has been caught it is important to convince the audience, make them believe in the message. Then provide further information to support the message. Offer facts and opinions to back up, develop and prove the points – try not to offer more than 3 main points or else it can become confusing.

e.g. Tell of Mr Smith's accident, flooding whilst on holiday, Chief Engineer's report, analysis of accidents from Police reports etc

Finish with a punchy conclusion. Try to sum up so the audience is still involved and will remember your message. A good conclusion often links back to the introduction.

SOME IDEAS FOR PREPARING A SPEECH

1. Jot down all the ideas and facts about your topic as you think of them - research the topic
2. Arrange your material according to where in the speech format /structure you think it would be best used. e.g. introduction, body, conclusion.
Note - no props are permitted.
3. Become really familiar with all the information you have and put it together in a way with which you feel comfortable.
4. Condense the main points and write on small cards which can be held in the palm of the hand.- do not attempt to write out the whole speech.
5. Practise your speech from your cards. Do it out loud as often as you feel you need to be comfortable with the flow. Also practise in front of a mirror so you can see your expression, stance and gestures.
6. Practise in front of your family and friends and ask them for constructive feedback. Involve your audience by including them with eye-contact.
7. Memorise the introduction and conclusion so you can involve the audience at the start as well as leave them with the full impact of your speech at the end.

USING YOUR VOICE

Remember that this is a speech and not a dramatic performance but still try to use and vary the following:

- **SPEED** - Speak slowly enough for the audience to understand you. Change your pace as appropriate.
- **PITCH** - You have a wide range of 1 to 2 octaves to use.
- **EXPRESSION** - Use your voice to show emotions e.g. fear, anger, excitement, sorrow etc .
- **VOLUME** - Every word of your speech is important. The whole audience needs to be able to hear every word or else they will "switch off" from you. Practise projecting your voice in a large room.
- **GESTURE** - Facial and body gestures should enhance not detract / distract.

ELEMENTS OF A GREAT SPEECH – THE TEN COMMANDMENTS!

1. Speak to their hearts - a great speech should be personal.
2. Make it real - your listeners feel like they are living the moment with you
3. Make it memorable - your listeners will remember your main points far into the future, even if they forget your name or speech title
4. Make it valuable - give your listeners some useful information they can take away with them
5. Interact with your audience - make your speech relevant through use of relevant humour, personal stories. Use lots of eye-contact.
6. Make it fun - if you're having a good time, so will your audience
7. Make it visual - use quotes, stories, anecdotes, and word pictures so your listeners can see it with their mind's eye as well as hear it
8. Make it passionate - if you really care about your topic, so will your audience
9. Be enthusiastic - your enthusiasm is infectious
10. Be clear, concise and brief - keep your words simple and to the point